



Updates in Workforce Development Opportunities and ARRA Reporting Requirements

In the last week, there were several new developments regarding job training in the Recovery Act. The State of Illinois Department of Commerce and Opportunity released a request for proposals for their ARRA discretionary funds and the Department of Labor released new guidance on reporting requirements. In addition, applications for a pilot program to connect public housing residents to green jobs were due on August 18th.

Grants Available for Sector Based Initiatives, Partnerships and Sustainability Stressed

The [Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity \(DCEO\)](#) is requesting applications for workforce training grant money from community colleges, universities, for profit and not-for-profit organizations, and community-based organizations, among others. Now that the stimulus [Workforce Investment Act \(WIA\)](#) funds are allocated to the states and the formula grants have been distributed to the Local Workforce Investment Areas, DCEO is issuing a [request for proposals \(RFP\)](#) for the final ten percent of the approximately \$165 million Illinois was awarded from the stimulus in WIA funds. This state discretionary funding will support initiatives in the sectors of healthcare, healthcare IT, manufacturing, transportation/distribution/logistics, and green initiatives that focus on the energy sector. Applicants can apply for more than one sector or sector initiative, and grants dispensed will be as large as \$500,000.

The RFP specifies a preference for projects that will create partnerships “between industry organizations, employers, education and training providers, and Local Workforce Investment Areas (LWIAs) to utilize incumbent, customized, on-the-job training, and class-size training mechanisms to accelerate training and provide transitional employment opportunities for workers while in training, where possible.” DCEO is looking for proposals that can be replicated and include ways to leverage the aid being provided and to create programs that can self-sustain after the grant ends. Projects should be innovative, coordinate with key partners (e.g., other agencies), and target underserved populations.

[Pre-Applications](#) must be submitted to [Tammy Stone](#) by September 21, 2009, and all [Proposals](#) are due the follow week on September 28. A Bidder’s Conference is being held in Chicago on September 21 from 1:30 to 3:30 pm to answer applicant questions about the grant.



HUD and DOL Form Partnership, Encourage Local Agencies to Do the Same

The U.S. Departments of [Housing and Urban Development \(HUD\)](#) and [Labor \(DOL\)](#) are [partnering](#) to create better job and training opportunities for residents of HUD housing through Recovery Act Programs. The two agencies received \$17.5 billion dollars combined to generate jobs, create housing and provide for long-term economic growth in communities hurt by the economic downturn. Both departments are requesting that local [Workforce Investment Boards \(WIBs\)](#) and [Public Housing Agencies \(PHAs\)](#) collaborate in finding ways to provide public housing residents access to training and jobs created by PHA's stimulus-funded capital improvement programs. This includes a pilot program designed to recruit qualified residents to weatherize homes in their own communities. Emphasis is placed on training and sustainable employment in the green jobs sector through the government's investment in energy efficiency.

The Secretaries of HUD and DOL "strongly encourage PHAs and WIBs to reach out to each other and engage in a dialogue about how we can work together to create green employment opportunities for residents of HUD housing." WIBs and PHAs are also encouraged to collaborate in finding partners to guarantee sufficient work support for the residents. More details on the HUD-DOL partnership and recommendations for local agencies can be found [here](#).

New Guidance on Reporting Requirements Online

Recipients of stimulus funding are required to report on funding usage and provide detailed information in order to improve transparency and accountability. New [guidelines](#) are now available online to compliment the full [Office of Management and Budget guidance](#). Data entry instructions with the final reporting requirements will be posted [online](#). Registration for Federal Agencies and Awardees of stimulus funds began on Monday, August 17.